

## Message Text

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11

ACTION EA-14

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1043

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

USMISSION GENEVA

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 HONG KONG 6459

CINCPAC FOR POLAD AND J111

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR TH BM LA HK

SUBJ: REPORT ON TRI-COUNTRY NARCOTICS MEETING

1. SUMMARY: REPRESENTATIVES FROM EMBASSIES BANGKOK, RANGOON, VIENTIANE , AND CONGEN HONG KONG MEET IN HONG KONG MAY 29-31 FOR REGULARLY SCHEDULED SESSION OF TRI-COUNTRY NARCOTICS MEETINGS SERIES. AS IN PREVIOUS SESSIONS, PRIMARY ACHIEVEMENT WAS OPPORTUNITY FOR INTERCHANGE OF IDEAS AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON STATUS OF ANTI-NARCOTICS EFFORTS AND PROGRAMS IN AREA. BESIDES STATUS REPORTS ON AREAS REPRESENTED, CONFEREES MET WITH HONG KONG COMMISSIONER FOR NARCOTICS NORMAN ROLPH. CONFEREES ALSO REVIEWED STATUS OF REGIONAL COOPERATION. IN GENERAL REVIEW OF WHERE WE ARE AND WHERE WE ARE GOING, CONFEREES GENERALLY CONCLUDED THAT MUCH HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED BUT, UNLESS ACTIVE USG PROGRAM CONTINUES, POTENTIAL FOR SEA NARCOTICS ENTERING THE US REMAINS HIGH.

2. AMONG POINTS NOTED BY CONFEREES WHICH WILL REQUIRE CON-  
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TINUING USG ALERTNESS AND POSSIBLY FUTURE ACTION WERE: A)

GRADUAL SOUTHWARD SHIFT OF TRAFFICKING IN BURMA AND POSSIBLE  
EVENTUAL NEW ROUTES BY LAND TO SOUTH THAILAND AND MALAYSIA;  
B) INDICATIONS THAT SOME KNOWN HK AND LAOS TRAFFICKERS HAVE  
TAKEN OR ARE SEEKING REFUGE IN TAIWAN; C) PRESENCE OF "RETIRED"  
HEROIN CHEMISTS IN MACAU AND REMOTE POSSIBILITY MACAU MIGHT  
BECOME A PRODUCTION/EXPORTING AREA; D) LIMITED PROGRESS MADE  
THUS FAR IN "RESETTLING" THAI-BASED CIF AND IN PROVIDING  
VIABLE ECONOMIC ALTERNATIVE TO THEIR OPIUM TRAFFICKING. END  
SUMMARY

3. EMBASSIES BANGKOK, RANGOON, AND VIENTIANE CONCUR IN THIS  
REPORT.

4. HONG KONG'S COMMISSIONER FOR NARCOTICS NORMAN ROLPH  
MET WITH PARTICIPANTS TO PROVIDE HIS VIEW OF CURRENT SITUATION  
BOTH IN HONG KONG AND IN SEA. ROLPH REVIEWED THE HISTORICAL  
BACKGROUND OF DRUGS IN HONG KONG, CURRENT HKG ENFORCEMENT  
EFFORTS, CHANGES IN TRAFFICKING PATTERNS TO HONG KONG (NOW  
CONSIDERED BY HIM TO BE PRIMARILY MORPHINE BASE ENTERING BY  
AIR AND OPIUM BY MERCHANT SHIPS FROM THAILAND, MALAYSIA AND  
SINGAPORE), MENTIONED HIS FORTHCOMING JULY VISIT TO WASHINGTON  
ALONG WITH BRITISH ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS TRAIN,  
AND DISCUSSED CURRENT PREPARATION OF SEVERAL PROPOSED CHANGES  
IN LOCAL LAWS. ONE PROPOSED AMENDMENT WILL PERMIT VERY HEAVY  
FINES AND CANING OF TRAFFICKERS (INCLUDING FOREIGNERS), A STEP WHICH  
HE HOPES WILL COUNTER PRESENT PRACTICE IN HONG KONG OF THE  
DEFENDANT'S ACCEPTING JAIL SENTENCES AND SMALL FINES WHICH ARE  
COUNTERED BY SYNDICATE PAYMENTS OF THE FINE AND ASSISTANCE TO  
THE FAMILY DURING HIS STAY IN JAIL. SINCE LEGAL CHANGES STILL IN  
PROPOSAL STAGE, THEY ARE CONSIDERED SENSITIVE BY HKG. ROLPH  
ALSO REITERATED HIS THOUGHTS ON PREEMPTIVE BUYING WHICH HE BELIEVES  
MERIT SPECIAL CONSIDERATION DURING A PERIOD WHEN THERE IS WIDE-  
SPREAD SHORTAGE OF LICIT DRUGS AVAILABLE TO PHARMACEUTICAL FIRMS.  
ROLPH ENDED OPTIMISTICALLY THAT HE BELIEVES A GREAT DEAL OF  
PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE IN THE LAST 15 MONTHS.

5. HONG KONG - HONG KONG GOVERNMENT IS CONTINUING ITS EFFORTS ,  
AT AN INCREASINGLY ACCELERATED PACE, TO COMBAT NARCOTICS IN THE  
COLONY. WHITE PATER ON NARCOTICS RELEASED IN LATE MARCH POINTS  
WAY AHEAD BOTH INTERNATIONALLY AND DOMESTICALLY. IN INTERNATIONAL  
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FIELD, HKG STRIVING FOR COOPERATION THROUGH SUCH ACTIVITIES AS  
COMMISSIONER ROLPH'S ATTENDANCE AT UN COMMISSION ON NARCOTICS  
MEETING IN GENEVA, WELCOMING OF UN AD HOC COMMITTEE'S RECOM-  
MENDATION OF ANNUAL MEETING OF SEA ANTI-NARCOTICS CHIEFS, INCREASED  
ACTIVITIES (INCLUDING VISITS TO BOTH LAOS AND BURMA) BY HK REGIONAL  
NARCOTICS OFFICER ATTACHED TO UK EMBASSY BANGKOK, ANTICIPATED  
EARLY JULY VISIT TO WASHINGTON, AND EXCHANGE OF VISITS WITH THAI  
NARCOTICS CHIEF, INTERNALLY, HKG MOVING TOWARDS MASSIVE TREAT-

MENT AND REHABILITATION PROGRAM, PRIMARILY METHADANE MAINTENANCE DESIGNED TO LESSEN HONG KONG'S ATTRACTIVENESS TO DRUG TRAFFICERS. CONTINUING HEAVY LAW ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS AND NEW LAWS NOW IN DRAFTING STAGE ARE AIMED AT BREAKING UP DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM WITHIN HONG KONG.

6. BURMA-- OUTLOOK IN BURMA APPEARS MORE OPTIMISTIC THAN IN PAST DESPITE MAGNITUDE OF TASK REMAINING. SINCE TOUGH NEW DRUG LAW ENACTED IN FEBRUARY, GUB HAS MOVED DECISIVELY IN LARGE-SCALE RAIDS AND SEIZURES, AS WELL AS IN QUICK IMPLEMENTATION OF HEAVY PENALTIES AGAINST OFFENDERS. BURMESE ARMY HAS INCREASED OPERATIONS, INCLUDING SIGNIFICANT INTERDICTION OF MAJOR OPIUM CARAVAN (RANGOON 1382). UNFIDAC TEAM IS EXPECTED TO VISIT RANGOON IN MID-JUNE TO DISCUSS UN COOPERATION IN EDUCATION, REHABILITATION, AND CROP SUBSTITUTION, AND THAI POLICE OFFICIALS VISITING IN EARLY JUNE. ADDITIONALLY, USG PROMISE OF HELICOPTERS WILL EVENTUALLY SIGNIFIANTLY INCREASE GUB'S ABILITY TO COPE WITH TRAFFICKING PROBLEMS. OF PRIME INTEREST IS FACT THAT GUB'S ANTI-NARCOTICS EFFORTS ARE LARGELY SELF-MOTIVATED AND, THEREFORE, HAVE GREATER PROMISE OF A CONTINUED STRONG DETERMINATION TO WIPE OUT DRUG PROBLEMS, AT LEAST IN AREAS UNDER EFFECTIVE GUB CONTROL. SOME CONFEREES NOTED THAT GUB ACCOMPLISHMENTS RESULTING FROM SUCH MOTIVATION MAY SERVE AS USEFUL SUPUR TO OTHER SEA GOVERNMENTS. TESTIMONY OF LO HSING-MIN HAS ALSO BEE MAJOR FACTOR IN PROVIDING GUB WITH DETAILED INFORMATION ON PERSONS, BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE GOVERNMENT WHO HAVE CONNIVED IN PAST NARCOTICS TRADE.

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
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CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 HONG KONG 6459

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7. THAILAND-- THAI PROGRESS IN THE CONTINUING EFFORT TO STEM THE NARCOTICS IN-FLOW FROM BURMA WAS REVIEWED, INCLUDING THE APRIL SEIZURE OF 377 KILOS OF RAW OPIUM FROM A KIA CAMP IN CHANG MAI AND THE ARREST OF A GROUP OPERATING A HEROIN REFINERY IN BANGKOK ON MARCH 9. IT WAS NOTED THAT AS A RESULT OF THE SUPPRESSION PROGRAM OF THE RTG, TRAFFICKERS HAD BEEN FORCED TO ABANDON OR TO MODIFY PREVIOUSLY USED TRAFFICKING METHODS. THE RTG IS NOW FACED WITH THE PROBLEM OF DEALING WITH FAR MORE DISPERSED PATTERNS OF TRAFFICKING AND WITH SHIFTING TRAFFICKING ROUTES. THE ESTABLISHMENT AT THE END OF MAY OF NEW SNO STATIONS AT MAE HONG SON, PHRAE AND SONGKHLA WERE MENTIONED AS PART OF THE RTG PROGRAM TO DEAL WITH THE CHANGING TRAFFICKING SCENE. A. THE PROGRAM OF THE THAI/UNPDAC IN CROP SUBSTITUTION AND IN THE TRAINING OF HILLTRIBE EXTENSION CADRE WAS NOTED. AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REACHED WITH THE 25 SATELLITE VILLAGES TO PLANT FIVE RAI EACH IN THAI/UNPDAC SPONSORED CROPS, WITH THE UN GUARANTEEING A RETURN IF PRICES FOR THESE CROPS ARE BELOW A MINIMUM. B. MENTIONED ALSO WAS THE SUCCESS OF THE USDA IN NEGOTIATING WITH THAI AGRICULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS CONTRACTS FOR BASIC RESEARCH IN ESSENTIAL OILS, STRAWBERRIES, CONFIDENTIAL

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NUTS, LEGUMES AND OTHER CROPS. THIS RESEARCH WILL COMPLEMENT THE PRACTICAL FIELD WORK OF THE THAI/UNPDAC. C. A SUMMARY REPORT ON THE USOM DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, ALSO DESIGNED TO COMPLEMENT THE UN EFFORT, WAS PRESENTED (SPECIFIC PROJECTS INCLUDE A HIGHLAND RESEARCH STATION, REFORESTATION, ACCESS ROADS, AN AERIAL SURVEY AND A PROCESSING FACTORY. D. FRANK DISCUSSION WAS CONDUCTED OF THE PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN THE THAI NARCOTICS PROGRAM, INCLUDING THE CONTINUING NEED FOR BETTER INTELLIGENCE, AND FOR GREATER CONTRIBUTIONS FROM ALL THAI ENFORCEMENT ORGANIZATIONS TO THE SUPPRESSION PROGRAM. IN CROP SUBSTITUTION THE DIFFICULTY IN MOTIVATING THAI IPMUS FOR WORK AMONG THE HILLTRIBES REMAINS A PROBLEM. EVER HIGHER OPIUM PRICES ARE AMONG THE TASKS OF THE THAI/UNPDAC INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT. E. IN THE FIELD OF MATERIAL SUPPORT IT WAS NOTED THAT RTG NARCOTICS SUBSIDIARIES HAD BEEN ENCOURAGED AND PLEASED BY THE ARRIVAL OF TWO US SUPPLIED HELICOPTERS IN APRIL AND BY THE AGREEMENT OF THE US TO PROVIDE FIVE MORE. IT WAS REPORTED THAT THE TWO RECENTLY ARRIVED HELICOPTERS WERE ALREADY BUSY IN NARCOTICS WORK IN THE NORTH.

8. LAOS-- END OF WAR IN LAOS AND FORMATION OF NEW PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNION (PGNU) HAS LED TO GENERAL POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY WHICH ALSO CONTRIBUTES TO UNCERTAINTIES AS TO FUTURE

OF ANTI-NARCOTICS PROGRAM THERE. PATHET LAO ATTITUDES TOWARD  
USG ANTI-NARCOTICS EFFORTS IN LAOS ARE STILL NOT CLEAR, WHILE  
PROGRAM REMAINS MISUNDERSTOOD BY PEOPLE ON VIENTIANE SIDE.  
SMALL US PROGRAMS IN INCOME SUBSTITUTION, REDIRECTION, AND  
DETOXIFICATION HAVE HAD SOME SUCCESS BUT THERE REMAINS NEED AND  
PRESSURE FROM THE LAO THEMSELVES FOR OTHER SUCH PROGRAMS  
BEYOND THE HEAVY CONCENTRATION OF EFFORTS ON LAW ENFORCEMENT.  
PROSECUTION OF ARRESTED DRUG VIOLATORS REMAINS A DIFFICULT  
PROBLEM GIVEN THE UNDEVELOPED STATE OF THE LAO LEGAL SYSTEM, AS  
DOES THE FURNISHING OF SIGNIFICANT NARCOTICS INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION.  
AMBASSADOR WHITEHOUSE, IN HIS CALLS ON NEW PAVNU LEADERS,  
HAS STRESSED CONTINUED USG INTEREST IN PAVNU ANTI-NARCOTICS  
EFFORTS AND PARTICULARLY THE NEED NOT ONLY TO ARREST BUT SENTENCE  
DRUG OFFENDERS TO SUITABLE JAIL TERMS.

9. TRANSPORTATION OF NARCOTICS-- VARIED ROUTES AND METHODS  
ARE CURRENTLY USED FOR TRAFFICKING BOTH WITHIN SEA AND FROM SEA  
TO OTHER AREAS. THAI AUTHORITIES FOLLOW UP ON INTELLIGENCE LEADS,  
BUT ACTUAL CARGO INSPECTION OF HEAVY VEHICLES IN THAILAND NORTH-  
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SOUTH COMMERCE IS A HERCULEAN TASK. THERE IS NOW LITTLE  
NORTH-SOUTH TRAFFICKING IN BURMA FOR EXPORT FROM RANGOON  
OR POINTS SOUTH, BUT THIS ROUTE  
HAS THE POTENTIAL FOR BECOMING MORE IMPORTANT. QUANTITIES OF OPIUM ENTER MALAYSIA VIA LAND AND SEA  
THROUGH THAILAND AND EITHER TRANSIT THE ENTIRE MALAY PENINSULA  
OR EXIT THROUGH A NUMBER OF PORTS SUCH AS PENANG, KOTA BHARU  
OR SINGAPORE. THAI TRAWLER TRAFFIC TO HONG KONG IS NOW BUT A  
FRACTION OF WHAT IT WAS A YEAR AGO. LIMITED INTELLIGENCE INDICATES  
LIKELY USE OF MERCHANT VESSELS, POSSIBLY FROM BANGKOK AND  
SINGAPORE, AS WELL AS COMMERCIAL AIR PASSENGERS TO SUPPLY  
HONG KONG'S NEEDS. PREVIOUS ESTABLISHED TRAFFICKING ROUTES HAVE  
BEEN HARD HIT BY ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS AND SMUGGLERS HAVE EITHER  
CHANGED ROUTES OR RESORTED TO DECEITS AND ARTIFICE TO DETOUR  
ENFORCEMENT SURVEILLANCE AND CONTINUE A FAIRLY STEADY SUPPLY.  
THE NEW DEA OFFICE IN SONGKHLA FITS INTO THE PATTERN OF SHIFTING  
TRAFFIC ROUTES. CLOSER FUTURE WORKING RELATIONSHIPS IN CAMBODIA,  
PARTICULARLY PHNOM PENH, WOULD ASSIST DEA IN FOSTERING EFFECTIVE  
ACTION THE THAILAND/CAMBODIA-VIETNAM SUPPLY ROUTE.

10. REGIONAL COOPERATION-- CONFEREEES GENERALLY CONCLUDED THERE  
WAS LITTLE USG COULD DO TO PROMOTE ADDITIONAL REGIONAL COOPERATION  
AND THAT ONLY INITIATIVE ORIGINATING WITH SEA COUNTRIES THEMSELVES  
HAVE REAL CHANCES FOR SUCCESS. REGIONAL COOPERATION CAN COME  
ABOUT ONLY WHEN IT IS IN THE FOREIGN POLICY INTEREST OF THE COUNTRIES  
CONCERNED. REGIONAL JOURNALIST EXCHANGE WAS AGAIN CONSIDERED A  
DESIRABLE GOAL BUT IT WAS AGREED THAT THERE IS LITTLE WE CAN DO TO  
ENCOURAGE SUCH EXCHANGE BEYOND BEING ON ALERT FOR POSSIBILITIES  
THAT MIGHT ARISE. COOPERATION ON A TECHNICAL LEVEL WAS GIVEN A

BETTER CHANCE OF SUCCESS. UNFDAC MOVEMENT INTO LAOS AND BURMA WILL POSSIBLY PERMIT AT LEAST UN ADVISORS TO COORDINATE AND PERHAPS EVEN EXCHANGES FROM BURMA AND LAOS TO VISIT CURRENT UNFDAC OPERATIONS IN THAILAND. THERE HAVE BEEN EXCHANGES OF CUSTOMS VISITS BETWEEN LAOS AND THAILAND AND OF BOTH NARCOTICS AND POLICE OFFICIALS BETWEEN THAILAND AND BURMA. ADDITIONALLY, UN AD HOC COMMITTEE SUGGESTION FOR ANNUAL MEETING OF SEA NARCOTICS CHIEF IS GOOD SUGGESTION WHICH WE HOPE WILL COME TO FRUITION. BASICALLY, USG MUST BE PREPARED TO SUPPORT ANY SUCH COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIPS BUT MOVE VERY CAUTIOUSLY IN PRESSING FOR OR ESPOUSING SUCH COOPERATION. HONG KONG MIGHT ALSO BECOME USEFUL SOURCE OF LOW-KEY TECHNICAL ADVICE AND CONFIDENTIAL

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SUPPORT , E.G., TO NEW BURMESE ENFORCEMENT AND TREATMENT PROGRAMS.

11. GENERAL FEELING OF CONFEREES WAS THAT SIGNIFICANT GAINS HAVE BEEN MADE AND PROFESSIONAL TRAFFICKERS HAVE BEEN FORCED INTO NEW ROUTES AND METHODS. PRICES HAVE DOUBLED AND TREBLED, GUB HAS BECOME MUCH MORE ACTIVE, AND HKG HAS INCREASED THE PACE OF ITS ANTI-NARCOTICS EFFORTS, ALL AT LEAST PARTIALLY RELATED TO CONTINUING USG EFFORTS IN THE AREA. THERE REMAINS MUCH TO BE DONE AND ALL AGREED THAT THE MAJOR REQUIREMENT IS A STRONG AND DEEP COMMITMENT BY ALL GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED.

13. CONFEREES AGREED NEXT MEETING WOULD BE IN RANGOON IN LATE FALL.  
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